

September 18, 1997

CONTACT: Judy Kelly  
(916) 657-2666

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CALFED ANNOUNCES PUBLIC MEETINGS THROUGHOUT STATE**

SACRAMENTO -- The CALFED Bay-Delta Program announced it will hold seven public meetings throughout California in preparation for the release of its draft programmatic Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (list of times and locations attached).

"These meetings are structured to both let people who've been following our progress get an update and to give those who've never heard of us a chance to learn about the CALFED Bay-Delta Program," said Lester Snow, executive director. "We want to ensure that when we release our draft environmental impact document, everyone who wants to participate in the process will be in a position to do so."

The informational meetings will feature an open-house session from 5:30 to 7 p.m. during which Program staff will be available to answer questions and provide information to those in attendance. A formal presentation will be held from 7 to 8:30 p.m., giving a general overview and update of the Program's progress as well as an opportunity for the public to comment on issues they think are important.

A series of formal public hearings will also be held upon release of the draft programmatic Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement. The schedule for those meetings will be announced later this year.

Ground zero for water in the State, the location where conflicting interests powerfully converge, is the Bay-Delta, located at the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers and impacted by the tides of San Francisco Bay. Struggling to meet the needs of the environment and water users, while maintaining good water quality and a levee system that protects local towns and infrastructure from flooding, the Bay-Delta system is no longer adequately meeting any of these needs.

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program was initiated by Governor Wilson and the Clinton Administration to address environmental and water management problems related to the Bay-Delta system.

The Bay-Delta is a critically important part of California's natural environment and economy. It supplies drinking water for more than 20 million Californians and irrigation water for more than four million acres of the world's most productive farmland, which, for example, produce 45 percent of the nation's fruits and vegetables. It supports 120 fish and wildlife species; some found nowhere else on the planet. Ultimately, California's trillion-dollar economy, the seventh largest in the world, is at risk if Bay-Delta environmental and water management problems are not resolved.

CALFED is made up of technical experts from various agencies, and given direction by the policy leadership of those agencies, as well as a federally chartered public advisory committee.

In addition, interested constituencies and the general public have participated in numerous technical and public workshops since the Program got underway in early 1995.

For further information about the CALFED Bay-Delta Program, please call (916) 657-2666 or visit its website, <http://calfed.ca.gov>.

###